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A
SERMON

Of the Absolute Necessity of

Family-Duties,

Preached to the

UNITED PARISHES

OF

St. Mary Woolnoth, & St. Mary Woolchurch-Haw

IN

LOMBARD-STREET.

By DAVID JONES Student of
Christ-Church. Oxon.

JER. 10. 25.

Pour out thy Fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not upon thy Name: For they have Eaten up Jacob, and Devoured him, and Consumed him, and have made his Habitation desolate.

L O N D O N,

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Family Bible

UNITED PARISHES

BY DAVID FORBES

Josh. 24. 15.

If it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, chuse you this day whom you will Serve : But, as for me and my House, we will Serve the Lord.

THese words were spoken by Joshua to the Children of Israel; and they do acquaint us,

First of all, That the Service of God may have a great many Prejudices and Objections rais'd against it: For, It may seem evil to some Men to serve the Lord.

Secondly, They inform us, that though the Service of God may have so many Prejudices and Objections rais'd against it; Yet, its Excellence is so far beyond all things in the World, that it may be safely put to any Mans Choice, whether he will serve God or no. The difference between Religion and Irreligion is so great, that no reasonable Man can be at a stand which to chuse: God is sure which way the choice will go. And therefore he says, Chuse you this day whom you will serve. And therefore they give us to understand,

Thirdly, That, If notwithstanding the Excellence of Religion, Men will be so wilfully blind, as to chuse Irreligion before it; Yet, it is the Duty of every Joshua, it is the Duty of every Master of a Family, to engage both Himself and his Family, to serve God

against all Opposition to the contrary. For, *If it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, chuse you this day whom you will serve: But, as for me and my House, we will serve the Lord.*

These Three Heads of Discourse would take me up Four Sermons at least. And therefore, the next Lords-Day being the last time that I shall Preach from this place; I shall now treat only of the last Proposition, which is most *Useful* for, and most *Neglected* by most Men. In treating of which, I shall shew you from *Joshua's* Example, That,

Every Master of a Family is indispensably bound in Conscience to bring up his Family in the Service of God. And the Reasons of this are such as these.

Reason 1. First of all. The Law tells us, *Deut. 20. 5.* That every Man was bound to *Dedicate*, or to *Consecrate*, or to *Sanctifie* his House unto the Lord. And the reason of the thing tells us, that it being impossible to *Sanctifie* the Walls of a House, there being no Sanctification, properly so called, in Stone, Brick and Timber: Therefore, to *Sanctifie* a House unto the Lord, is nothing else, but to be careful for the Instruction of a Man's Family, and to bring it up in the Service of God; that so, his House may be God's House, his Children God's Children, and his Servants God's Servants.

For indeed, if a Man does not instruct his Family at Home all the Week long, their going to Church on the Lord's-day does them little or no good: For, the Master does them as much and more harm in his *own House*, than the Minister did them good in *God's House*. The Masters bad Example
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out-does the Preachers good Preaching, though he Preaches *with the Tongues of Men and Angels*. The Master's customary *Swearing and Drinking*, and *Cheating in his way of Trade*, every Day in the Week, out-does a little short florid Sermon, only once or twice a Week. And that too perhaps, design'd only to *please a few itching Ears*, and not to sink down deep enough, and to work upon their Hearts and Consciences. The Masters neglect of *Family-Duties* which the Minister presses so home, and upon his Conscience in Church, makes the Servant imagin, that the Minister is some *Precise, Rigid Puritan*, that would fain oblige Men to such things as God never obliged them to. For else says the Servant, *My Master who is reckon'd such a Grave, Prudent and Just Man in all other things, would never be so unjust to God, as to deny him the small Tribute of Family-Duties, if he thought they were any way due to him*. And by this means, the Master infects his Servant, and the Servant infects his Servant when he has one; and so on to the end of the World. And thus, as I take it, the case now stands at this present time; I would to God I were mistaken in it! This Evil of neglecting *Family-Duties*, is come to so great a Head, that *partly* by the strength of Custom and Prescription, which some Men impudently pretend for it: *Partly*, by the General corruption of Manners: And *Partly*, for want of frequent and affectionate Preaching against it, it will be a very hard matter to convince Men of their Duty in this case.

And therefore, notwithstanding it is my usual way to spend much time in the Application of my Discourses to the *Hearts* of Men, yet at this time, I shall

shall be forced to apply my self wholly to your *Judgments*, by endeavouring to Convince them of the *Absolute Necessity of Family-Duties*, without ever applying my self to raise and to stir up your *Affections*, which must be reserved to some other opportunity, and some other Hand.

Reason 2. Secondly The Character that God gave *Abraham* was this: *I know him*; that is, I approve of him, I commend him for what I know in him: *I know him that he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do Justice and Judgment*, Gen. 18. 19. This was one of our Father *Abraham's* greatest Commendations. And therefore without all doubt, it made up the greatest, or at least, a very considerable part of his bounden Duty and Service. And therefore also, if ever we will be the true Sons of our Father *Abraham*, *We must do the Works of our Father Abraham*; and among the rest, we are more especially bound to do this Work of his, we are to command our Children and our Household after us. We are to take care for them against that time, when we shall be dead and gone, lest our Memory should Stink and Rot among Men. We are in our Life-time to take care what shall become of them after our Death. We are to command them to keep the way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment. And we are to bring them up in the Service of God. And therefore we find, that when Christ had converted *Zaccheus*, he said, *This day is Salvation come to this House, forasmuch as he also is the Son of Abraham*, Luke 19. 9. Mark it all you Masters of Families: Christ does not say, this Day is Salvation come to this

this *Man Himself*: But, it is come to this *Man's House* also; his whole House, as well as himself was to be saved by his Salvation. And if you would know the reason of it, he tells you in the very next Words, that the reason of it was this; *The Master of that House was the Son of Abraham*; and therefore, he was bound to bring up his Family in the Service of God, as his Father Abraham had done before him. For, if Peter, or any one else that is Chief or Head of a Place, do fall away from his Duty; then, others also; yea, a very Barnabas himself will be drawn away too. And therefore, tho he himself discharge his own Duty well enough; yet, if he takes not care, that all under him discharge theirs also, he is guilty of their Sin. God never increaseth a Man's Family, but at the same time he increaseth his Charge and his Care too. It is not enough for a Master of a Family to do the Duty of a Man; but he must also do the Duty of a Master of a Family. And thus, it is not enough for a Constable, or a Church-warden, or a Justice of Peace to do the Duty of a Master of a Family, and to look after his own Affairs at home; but he must also do the respective Duties of Constable, Church-warden, or Justice of Peace.

Thirdly. The Fourth Commandment commands *Reason 3.* every Master of a Family to take care of his Son and Daughter; his Man-Servant and Maid-Servant; yea, and even of the very Cattle and Strangers that are within his Gates, *that is*, within his Jurisdiction or Protection. And certainly; That God, who commands every Master of a Family to take care of his Servants, does much more command him to take
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care of his *Children*. And that God, who commands every Master of a Family to take care of his *Cattle* and his *Strangers*, that is, his *Lodgers* and his *Sojourners*, does much more command him to take care of his *Servants*. For, a Christian Servant is really more than a Servant, *he is above a Servant, he is a Brother beloved*, Philem. 16. Yea rather, *There is no difference between either Bond or Free: for, we are all but one in Christ Jesus*, Gal. 3. 28.

Reason 4. Fourthly. Every Master of a Family is bound to do as much Good as he can in his Generation: Or, as the Scripture speaketh, of the Patriarch *David*, he is bound to *serve his Generation*. And whoever that Master of a Family is, who does not bring up his Family in the Service of God, he does not bring it up to serve his Generation: But, he is so far from serving it, that he does it all the Disservice imaginable. For, as *Aristotle* observeth in his *Politicks*, Families are the first Societies in Nature, and they are the Ground and Original of all the rest. Families are the Nurseries and the Seminaries of a Commonwealth. They are the same to a Kingdom, that a *Fountain* is to the *Streams* that flow from it: Or that a *Cause* is to the *Effects* that come from it. And as the *Streams* can never be good when the *Fountain* is bad; and as the *Effects* can never be good when the *Cause* is bad: So likewise, *No Kingdom can ever be good as long as the Families of the Earth are out of course*.

And therefore, the best, and indeed, the only way to make Godly Parishes, and Godly Countries, and Godly Kingdoms, is, to begin where we ought to begin.

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It is in the first place, *To make Godly Families.* And therefore, a Minister is not only bound to Teach his People in Publick, but he is also to Teach them in Private: He is not only to go and meet them in *God's House*, but he is also to go and meet them in their *own Houses*, if he may be admitted without any extraordinary Rudeness offered to his Person and Message: He is to go *from House to House*, and to set up a Godly, and a *Strict* Discipline in their Families. And let no Man imagin that he has not Authority enough to do this. For, *St. Paul* did it, *Acts* 20. 20. And what he did, is written for our instruction, that we might do so too. Assure your selves, Every Minister has as much Power to demand God's Rent out of every House, *that is*, to call them to an account for the Improvement of their Spiritual Talents, as any Gentleman's Steward has to call for, and demand his Masters Rents from his Tenants, *Matth.* 21. 24. And Wo be to Us if we do not exercise this Power! And Wo be to them that will not suffer us to put it in Execution! But serve us, as those *Wicked* and *Barbarous* Husbandmen served the Lord's Servants, who went to demand the Fruits of their Lord's Vineyard, either *beat us*, or *stone us*, or *kill us*, or *send us away empty*, and *cast us out of the Vineyard*, ver. 35, 39.

From the Families it is, that Vertue or Vice, a good or a bad Example, does first arise, and spread it self both far and near. And therefore, the Families are to be carefully looked after in the first place. *One Atheistical Family is enough to infect the whole Neighbourhood.* It sendeth a Son into one House, a Daughter into another, a Servant into another, and some Body or other almost into every

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House.

House. And every one of them; like so many infected Persons, do poyson and infect all those with whom they converse. But what do I say, that one Atheistical Family is enough to infect the whole Neighbourhood? When it is plain, That *One Man, One Jeroboam, is enough to infect the whole Church and State, and to make all Israel to sin, even for many Ages after his Death.* One Achan troubled all Israel, and brought a severe Judgment upon them all by his own single Trespas, *Josb. 7.* throughout the Chapter. One incestuous *Corinthian* made all the Church of *Corinth* to be *puffed up*, and involved them all in his Fault, because they had him not Excommunicated, *1 Cor. 5. 2.* One infected Member infects all the rest. And we Christians are all of us but so many Members one of another: And therefore, *The care of one, ought to reach to, and affect us all,* *Rom. 12. 5. 15.*

Reason 3. Fifthly, No Master of a Family can have any Assurance of his own Goodness, unless he endeavour to make all his Family good as well as himself. He can have no sure sign of Grace in himself, unless he endeavour to make all about him to grow in Grace. For, even Nature teacheth us, that if a Needle be but touched with a Loadstone, it will draw others along with it. And the very Birds of the Air teach us the same Lesson. And why should not I send you to them for Instruction, as *Solomon* sends the Sluggard to the Ant for Good Husbandry? The very Birds of the Air teach us the same Lesson: For, they no sooner find a little heap of Corn themselves, but they presently Chirp and call their Fellows to come and partake with them. And therefore we find, that God does frequently make this to be the mark

mark of a sound Christian that is himself thoroughly Converted, when his Care reacheth unto his Family, and he endeavours to Convert that as well as himself. For, the Mark of *Abraham's* goodness was, *that he would command his Children and his Household after him.* The Mark of *Josua's* goodness was, *that he and his House would serve the Lord against all Opposition.* The Mark of *Zaccheus's* goodness was, *that he would save his House as well as himself.* The Mark of *Cornelius the Centurion's* goodness was, *that he was a Devout Man, and one that Feared God with all his House.* The Mark of *Lydia and the Jaylor's* goodness was, *that they and their Households were Baptized.* The Mark of *Crispus the chief Ruler of the Synagogue's* goodness was, *that he believed on the Lord, with all his House.* Yea, and the Mark of the Noble-Man of *Capernaum's* goodness was, *that he himself believed and his whole House.* Neither Men nor Women, neither Rich nor Poor, neither Noble-Men, nor Rulers, nor Jaylor's, no, nor yet the very Soldiers of those Times, thought it below them to look after, and to instruct their Families in the Fear of God. Yea, and Holy *David*, though he were a King, did not think it below him to perform the same good Office to his Family. For, so careful was he upon this account, that he has left us the whole 101 Psalm as a Pattern for all Masters of Families to walk by. And yet alas! How much is this Duty neglected by all sorts of Men now-a-days, which was heretofore so much, if not Universally Practic'd. But however, let the neglect of it be what it will, yet sure it is, if thou dost not do all thou canst to make thy whole House good as well as thy self, thou hast no good Assurance that thou thy self art a good

Man. And therefore we find in *Exod.* 12. 48. That no Profelyte might presume to come to the Passover, unless his whole House as well as himself were Circumcised, and professed the *Jewish* Religion. And how few then should now come to the holy Sacrament, if this Law, as well as its Equity were still in force? And we find also, that God would have Killed *Moses* in the Inn, in his way to *Egypt*, because he had not Circumcised his Son, *Exod.* 4. 24. The great Concern of his Embassage, and the great Haste it requir'd, could not possibly have prevented his Death, if his Wife had not presently Circumcised his Son. *God never trusts them with any Pullick Affairs, who are negligent in their Private Capacities.* And we find further in *Dent.* 30. 2, 3. That the *Israelites* had no hope of ever returning from Captivity, unless their Children as well as themselves would return unto the Lord, and obey his Voice.

Obj.

But these you'll say, are all of them Old Testament Proofs; and what do those affect you who are not under the Severe Discipline of a School-Masters Rod, but the Milder Dispensation of the Gospel of Christ?

Answ.

But thanks be to God for it, neither Christ nor his Gospel do in the least disingage you from *Family-Duties*, but do rather much more Confirm and Establish them. For, *St. Paul* is expresse, *1 Tim.* 3. 4, 5. *That no Man may be made a Bishop or a Priest, but one that ruleth well his own House, having his Children in Subjection with all Gravity. For, if a Man know not how to Rule his own House, how shall he take care of the Church of God?* Nay, and what's a great deal more
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than all this, *St. Paul* tells us plainly, *1 Tim. 5. 8.* That if any provide not for his own, though they be abroad and gone from him; and especially for those of his own House, that are at Home with him, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel. And if a Man have denied the Faith, and be worse than an Infidel, that does not provide Food and Raiment for his Family, and take care for the welfare of their Bodies only: How bad then is that Man that does not provide for the Souls of his Family? For, is it not worse to starve the Soul, than to starve the Body? And is not Eternal Death far worse than Temporal Death? And are not the Gnawings of the never-Dying Worm, far more intolerable, than the cravings of an Empty Stomach? Certainly, as much as the Soul exceeds the Body, so much the worse is that Man that neglects the Souls of his Family, than he that neglects their Bodies. And yet, if he that only neglects their Bodies, have denied the Faith, and be worse than an Infidel: Then judge you your selves, what Name is bad enough for that Man that neglects their Souls? And now, let any Master of a Family, that does not bring up his House in the Service of God, tell Me and this Congregation, how he can pretend to be a Christian, when *St. Paul* tells him here to his Face, that he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel.

And if any of you shall be pleased to call me *Rash, Censorious, Positive, Peremptory*, and I know not what, for passing such a severe Judgment upon you that are guilty of this Sin, (if any of you are guilty of it,) do but remember it is not my Judgment, but *St. Paul's*: And then, if you must needs find fault, find fault with him; and let him answer for

for it, and not I. And with Him, not to say with Us, *It is a very small thing that we should be judged of You, or of Mans judgment: He that judgeth us is the Lord,* 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4. And therefore, do you say what you will, I do conclude notwithstanding, that no Master of a Family can have any Assurance of his own Faith; for, *he hath denied that:* and consequently, he can have no Assurance of his own Salvation neither, unless he endeavour to make all his Family good as well as himself. He can have no sure sign of Grace in himself, unless he endeavour to make all about him to grow in Grace.

Reason 6. Sixthly. A Bad Master of a Family makes all his Family bad; or at least, he is not wanting on his part, as far as his bad Example will go. An Adulterous Master makes all his Family to serve his Lust, and prompts them to Uncleanness. A Drunken, Swearing Master, provokes all his Family to give themselves to Drinking and Swearing: And a Covetous Master brings the very Root of all Evil into his Family, and infects them all with a stingy penurious Humour, which *Eats up* the very Vitals and Bowels of Christianity. And shall not a good Master of a Family be as careful to make his Family good, as a bad Master is to make his Family bad? Shall not the good be as true to God, as the bad is to the Devil? Shall not Heaven ingage the good to make as many Converts, as Hell does ingage the Bad? And shall not everlasting Joys be as strong and prevailing Motives, as everlasting Torments? Oh how will the Devil insult over thee for this at the day of Judgment! How will he then *Accuse* thee for this, which he now *provokes* thee to, and *commends*

mends thee for ! And how will he then upbraid thee for, having promoted his Kingdom of Darkneſs, more than thou didſt the Kingdom of Chriſt ? Me thinks I hear, and I even tremble to hear him Plead againſt thee after ſome ſuch manner as this ! *This Man was thine by Creation, O Chriſt ; but he has made himſelf mine by his own Choice. He was thine whether he would or no ; he could not hinder his Creation ; but he became mine by his own voluntary Act and Deed. Thou didſt Redeem him ; but he preſently ſold himſelf to me for a triſtle, for nothing, for worſe than nothing ; for Death, for Eternal Death. Thou didſt Dye for him ; but he ſerved me, and lived and died in my Service, in the drudgery and ſlavery of Sin. And yet for all this, I gave him nothing, and I promiſed him nothing, ſave only the burden of a Surfeit, or the vanity of Fame, or the filthy pleaſure of a Night, or the joys of Madneſs, or the delights of a Diſeaſe, or the comfortable entertainment of Horror, Anguiſh and Deſpair. I never Sweated great Drops of Blood for him ; I never Hunged upon the Croſs for him ; only, when he was thine by the merit of thy precious Death, he became mine by his own haſe Ingratitude. He Swore in his Baptiſm, to be thy Soldier, and he has forſworn himſelf a Thouſand times over to Fight my Battles. He ought to have made his Houſe a Houſhold of Faith, but he has made it a Den of Thieves, and a Cage of every unclean thing. None of my Servants do ſerve me thus : My Servants are all true and faithful to me ; they take care that nothing be ſeen or heard in their Houſes all the Year long ; but Drinking, and Swearing, and Gaming, and Whoring, and Backbiting, and ſuch like extravagant Frolicks. And yet, does this Maſter of a Family pretend to be thy Servant, and ſerve me all the while, and ſuffer*
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his House to be full of all manner of Sinners, yea, and prefer Sinners to his Acquaintance, to his Table, to his Bosom, to his very Bed, before those which his own Conscience cannot but tell him to be good and honest Men. And this, or some such invidious Accusation, the Accuser of the Brethren, the Devil, will certainly bring against thee at the Day of Judgment. And therefore, as thou wouldst avoid it Then; so, be thou Now sure to bring up thy Family in the Service of God: which is the only thing that will be able to stop the Devil's Mouth against thee at that *great and terrible Day of the Lord.*

And here now I am presently aware of a Midling sort of Men, who are neither notorious ill Livers, nor notorious good Livers: Who neither drink nor swear, nor whore, nor keep any bad hours in their Families. And these Men content themselves with a *Negative* sort of Religion. They think it enough to eschew Evil, and they never think of doing Good. They think it enough to have their Families at home, and to give them good ordinary Food and Raiment, and to keep them in pretty good Order for their Credit and their Trade's sake; and they never think of providing for their Immortal Souls, for God's sake, tho they do much more deserve, and do much more stand in need of their utmost Assistance. They call them to an exact Account for every Farthing that they entrust them with; and they never call them to any Account at all for those innumerable Talents that God hath committed to their Charge. They enquire of them diligently what News they have heard abroad; and they never enquire of them what good Sermon they have heard at Church, and how much the better they are

are for having heard it. They ask them, whether such a strong Place, or such a Fortress be taken or surrendred; and they never ask them whether such a Thorn be taken out of their Flesh, or such a Sin taken Captive, or such a *Jericho* demolished, or such a Lust mortified, or such earthly Members crucified to the Cross of Christ. They *take on mightily*, and *lay on unmercifully*, if they be not always at home to wait on them at their Tables, and they never are at all concern'd whether ever they wait at God's Table, and go to his Altar to receive the Blessed Sacrament.

And thus these Middling Sort of Men do keep their Families at home indeed, but they do not make them do any good at home. They keep them from the grosser Acts of Sin, but they do not bring them up to Vertue. They keep them from Drinking, and Swearing, and Whoring, (*and 'twere well if all would but do so much*) but they do not bring them up to Read and to Pray, and to sing Psalms; and they do not instruct them in the Principles of Religion, by Catechizing them, and Reading and expounding the Scriptures to them, as far as they are able.

Sure I am, These and such like Godly Exercises were constantly used in those *Late Times*, which some Men have learned to call *Hypocritical*. But how deservedly, let them look to it. For, none is able to distinguish a *Hypocrite* from an *Honest Man*, unless he can do as God does, *Search the Heart*. And if our Religion does not Exceed, *yea*, does not Equal, that of the Hypocrites, Good God, what will become of us! Let us have a care lest our Portion be not as good as theirs! Let us not deceive our selves! The close Hypocrite does not do the Church

of God so much Harm as the Profane Person. The Hypocrite commends Religion. For, none counterfeits that which is bad. But the Profane Person lives in open Defiance to it, and proclaims War against Heaven, and dares the Almighty to his Face. *Ahab's* Hypocritical Repentance procured him a great Temporal Blessing, even from God Himself. But we never read of any Blessing that God bestows upon a Man for his Profaneness. And therefore

First of all, Do not thou call any Times Hypocritical. For, thou dost not know which are so, and which are not so. And then

Secondly, Do not thou presume to neglect *Family-Duties*, because they were most practiced in those Times, which thou thinkest most Hypocritical. The very Hypocrite's Practice of them, both justifies and commends them. For, he is never at the pains to counterfeit ought but what is good. The Devil transforms himself only into an Angel of Light, or at least, something else that is better than himself.

Let us not therefore thus pitifully deceive ourselves any longer. The Hypocrite's practice of *Family-Duties* will not justify, but condemn us, and aggravate our Condemnation for their Neglect. God neither is, nor will, nor can be mocked by you. Your *Sins of Omission* are damnable as well as your *Sins of Commission*. Your omitting *Family-Duties* is damnable, as well as your committing *Family-Sins*. Men shall be damned for doing *Nothing*, as well as for doing *Something that is bad*. *Idleness* is mortal as well as *Sinfulness*. And the slothful Napkiner of his Talent is accountable for That, as well as he that spends his Estate upon Ease, Luxury and Pomp. Men shall be damned not only for *Cheating, and Oppressing, and grinding*

grinding the Face of the Poor ; but also, for *not Assisting*, and *not Relieving* the Poor ; for not giving them *Meat, Drink, Cloathing* and *Lodging* when they stand in need of it, as too many of them do in this cold Season of the Year, as you heard this Morning from His Majesty's Gracious Letter to the Lord Bishop and the Lord Mayor of *London*, on the behalf of the Poor in and about this City. Which I would have you all *Effectually* to lay to Heart. And therefore

I beseech thee, *yea*, I beg of thee for Christ his sake, and for thine own sake too, that when thou hast taken so much care to keep thy self from *Sins of Commission*, do not suffer thy self to be damned for *Sins of Omision*. Thou that hast kept thy self from *Doing Evil*, do not suffer thy self to be undone for *not doing Good*. Thou that hast kept thy Family from Sin, do not suffer thy self to perish for not bringing it up to Vertue. It is the height of Misery to have watched for the Bridegroom till he was just coming, and then in the very nick of Time to fall asleep, and to be shut out for ever from the Marriage-Feast. It is the utmost disappointment to fall short of the Prize within a step of the Races end. There are Proverbs made on't. 'Tis a disappointment beyond Expression, beyond Thought, beyond all things, to go to the Devil in the sight of God, and to be tumbled into Hell from Heaven-Gates. And therefore, thou that hast taken so much care with thy Family, do not make thy self eternally miserable for not taking a little more care with it. Thou that hast gone so far, do not damn thy self for not going one step farther. Do not forfeit Heaven for one bad Action. Do not forfeit Eternity for nothing, for one Sin of Omision, the Omision of Family-Duties.

Reason 7. *Seventhly*, Self-love and Self-preservation oblige a Man to bring up his Family in the Service of God, tho he himself has not God in all his Thoughts. For, Self-preservation obliges a Man to avoid a Pest-House, or an House infected with the Plague: It obliges him to avoid all violent Torments, such as the *Rack*, the *Wheel*, and the *Gallows*; and it never makes him over-fond either of *Sword*, *Fire*, or *Faggot*. And yet, the very same Principle that obliges a Man to avoid these and such like fatal Messengers of God's Wrath, does much more oblige him to bring up his Family in the Service of God, and to empty his House of all Bad Livers. For, if thy Servant be sick of any *Catching* Distemper, dost not thou presently get him out of thy House, lest Thou, and thy Wife, and thy Children, and the rest of thy Family should catch that Distemper? And yet, is there any Distemper half so catching, and half so mischievous, as that of Sin? And wilt not thou then much more get rid of a Sinful, than a Sick Servant? Especially, seeing all his Sickness is only the effect of his Sinfulness; And it is Charity, and perhaps thy Duty, to entertain thy sick Servant, which thou art never bound to do to thy sinful Servant. Dost thou harbor a Company of *Thieves* or *Robbers* in thy House, if thou hast any thing by thee that is worth their stealing? Dost thou harbor a Company of *Adulterers* or *Fornicators* in thy House, if thou hast either a *Chaste Wife*, or a *Chaste Daughter*, or a *Chaste Maid* living with thee? And yet, wilt thou harbor a Company of *Wicked Servants* in thy House, that will rob thee of thy very Soul, and will bring the Curse and the Plague of God upon thee and all thy Family? Yea, wilt thou harbor a Company of *In-*
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incarnate Devils in thy House? For, what our Saviour said of *Judas*, *I have chosen Twelve Disciples, and behold one of them is a Devil*, is but too true of every other Wicked Man, he is a Devil; he is led, or rather violently hurried on, by the same Spirit that the Devil himself is led by. And art not thou afraid to keep a Company of *Incarnate Devils* in thy House, when a little *Fire* or *Water*, or a few *Thieves* shall be ready to make thee at thy Wits end?

Eighthly, Self-Interest obliges a Man to bring up *Reason 8.* his Family in the Service of God, though he himself careth not for God. And *Interest* certainly will do much in such a place as *This*, when all other things fail. Where *Robbing of Orphans*, *Oppressing Widows*, *Grinding the Face of the Poor*, *Gripping Usury*, and *Suing out Pardons from the State for Extortion*: Where these and such like abominable Sins do reign at such a rate; certainly *Interest*, yea, the very Name of it, will pass for a stronger Argument than all the *Power and Demonstration of the Spirit*. And therefore, methinks, that *this Place* of all others should be most remarkable for *Family Duties*, which advance their *Interest* even to an Hundred-fold. For, if a Man be bad himself, yet if he have but a good Servant, God will bless that bad Man for the sake of his good Servant. For, notwithstanding *Potiphar* was an Idolater, and notwithstanding his Wife was an Adultress, and would have committed a Rape upon her Chast Servant, that preferred the *Members of Christ* before the *Members of such a Lewd Harlot*: Notwithstanding all these Villanies that were enough to have undone a whole Kingdom, and much more one House: Yet still, the Holy Ghost is express, that the Lord blessed the *Egyptians House* for *Joseph's* sake. And again, The Lord blessed

sed the House of Obed-Edom, for the Arks sake. *And again*, The Lord blessed *Laban* for his Servant *Jacob's* sake. *And again*, The Lord cured *Naaman* the Syrian of his Leprosie, for his little Hebrew Maids sake. *And again*, The Lord saved all the Men that were with *Paul* in the Ship, for *Paul's* sake. *And again*, The Lord would have saved all *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* for the sake of Ten Righteous Men. *And in one word*, whatever a good Servant putteth his Hand to, the Lord will prosper it in his Hand, *Psal.* 1. 3. And who then would be without a good Servant, or some other good Man in his Family, if he might be had either for *Love* or *Mony*, if he might be had at any rate? Especially, seeing that even Self-Interest obliges a Man to get him such a one. And therefore, though a Man should be never so bad himself, yet even his Interest would oblige him, one would think, to bring up his Family in the Service of God, though he, like the Unjust Judge in the Gospel, *cared neither for God nor Man*, nor did at all value either Heaven or Hell.

Reason 2. *Lastly*, Good Manners, and good Breeding, and common Civility, oblige a Man to bring up his Family in the Service of God, though he himself has no Religion at all. For, there is no Man so ill-bred, as to invite a Friend to take a Commons with him, and yet provide him nothing but what he knows he hath a perfect *Antipathy* against, and what he hates in his Heart, and what will make him *Swoon* away at the very sight of it. No Man is so ill-bred as to serve his Friend thus. And I believe, that no Man is so ill-bred as to invite a Friend to a Place, where he can neither see, nor hear, nor speak to any but what are his Mortal Enemies, and what have Murdered

dered his best and his only Friend, and what would Murder him also, if ever they meet him. No Man certainly is so ill-bred as this comes to. And yet we all know, there is scarce a wicked Man upon Earth, but what Prays in his House at some time or other, or at least sends for the Minister to Pray with him at the point of Death. Then at least, once in his Life-time, the Minister, *That Diminutive Creature he so often Laugh'd at, and Libel'd in all Places;* the Minister is thought fit for his Company, when he himself is fit for no Bodies else. And what is it for a Man to pray to God in his House? Is it any thing else, but to desire God to come into, and to Bless his House, and to enter under his Roof, and to Dwell in the Temple of his Body, and to Sup with him, and to translate him from Death to Life, and from Earth to Heaven? Is a Family-Prayer any thing else? *And yet shall that Wicked Man invite God to come into that place, that place of Sin, that Dunghil of Filth, his own House, which he knows that God hates, and loaths and abhors? Shall that Wicked Man invite God to come into the Company of those wicked Servants of his, who have Crucified his only begotten Son, and trampled upon the Lord of Life, and counted his Blood an unholy thing, and done despite to his Spirit of Grace? Shall that wicked Man invite a Jealous God to come into the Company of Whoremongers and Adulterers, whom he himself will judge to Eternal Scorchings in Hell Fire? Shall that Wicked Man invite God to come into that place where he shall hear himself Cursed and Sworn against, and his Name Blaphemed to his Face? Where he shall see a Swinish Lust preferr'd before him, and a Drunken Cup preferr'd before the Cup of Blessing, and a PAINTED Jezabel preferr'd before the Charms of the Immaculate Jesus that*
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has neither SPOT nor Wrinkle? Would any Man that has either Good Manners, or good Breeding, or any common Civility left him; would any Man at all serve a Friend at such a rate, such a barbarous rate as this? What, send for a Friend to abuse and affront him in his own House, and to buffet and to spit upon him, and to turn him out of Doors as soon as he comes, wounded, mangled, bleeding, gasping, dead, dead with the death of the Cross? And yet, at this and a far worse rate does every Man serve God, who invites him to come into his House, where he can neither see nor hear any thing, but what Wounds and Stabs him to the Heart, and pierces his Bleeding Sides, and Crucifies him afresh, and puts him again to an open shame.

And now canst thou possibly find in thy Heart to serve God thus? What has God done that he should deserve this at thy Hands? The very *Abjects* of the People that came about, and the *Drunkards* that made Songs, and Jested upon Holy *David*, did not serve him so ill as thou dost God. Nay, and ev'n *Balaam* himself did not serve his very *Ass* so ill as thou dost God: He presently saw his Error, but thou goest on still in thine, and wilt not see it. Tell me seriously, wherein has God offended thee so much, that thou dost thus use him? Is not God thy *Creator*, thy *Preserver*, thy *Redeemer*, thy *Saviour*, thy *All*? If yet thou hast any share at all in him. And which of all these unspeakable Mercies makes thee so much his Enemy? 'Tis greatly to be feared, that thou hast not the least Interest in God. Thou hast not the least Interest in that *House* which thou thy self dost wilfully set on Fire. Thou hast not the least interest in that *Ship* which thou thy self dost help to Sink. Thou art not the *Right Owner* of that *Child* which

which thou thy self dost cause to be divided, and killed in it's *Mother's Presence*.

And if it be against all Good Manners to invite God to come into your Houses that you may affront him to his Face: Then, No Man that pretends to love God may presume to keep Company with bad Men, where God is daily affronted, without forfeiting all Claims to good Breeding. For, can I possibly go into that Company, and can I take any Pleasure in that Society, which abuses, and kills my Friend, *that I love as my own Soul*? Yea, Is it not far worse for me to take pleasure in bad Men's Company, than it is for me to be a bad Man my self? *Is it not worse for me to love a Fornicator, than it is for me to be a Fornicator*? Yea verily. For says St. Paul speaking of Fornicators, and the Haters of God, *They knowing the Judgment of God (that they which commit such things are worthy of Death) not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them*, Rom. 1. 32. From whence it is plain, *That to take pleasure in those Men's Company that do bad things, is far worse than for a Man to be bad himself*. And therefore for the future, take special care what Men and Women's Company you take Delight in, and become *One Flesh with*. Do not find fault with those Men that bear their Testimony against these things. And do not reckon those Men proud, who are resolved, by God's Grace, *to live and die according to these Rules, and to avoid all Familiarity with all God's Enemies, as far as they know them*. For, how canst thou possibly pretend to be the *Sponse of Christ, and yet take her for thy Wife, or him for thy Husband, who takes the Members of Christ and makes them the Members of an Harlot*? From all which it is plain. That tho thou pretendest to no great share of Religion: Yet, thou pretendest

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to Good Manners, and Good Breeding, and Common Civility; and these very Motives, if there were none besides, oblige thee to bring up thy Family in the Service of God.

And yet alas! these very Men that pretend most to Good Breeding and good Manners, do treat God, the most unmannerly and the most rudely of all others. For, their Houses have the least Devotion in them. There it is, *that Reading the Scripture, and Praying, and Singing of Psalms, and Repeating of Sermons, and Examining and Instructing of Families are the least observed.* The richer those Men are, the more careless they are in Family-Duties. *That is in plain English,* The more kind God is to them, the more unkind, and the more ungrateful they are to him. Those very Blessings that should oblige them to bring God's Service into their Families, are used as Arguments to banish it out of all their Dwellings. Their very Greatness, *Their Honour*, which should oblige them to honour God most, for having honoured them so much above their Fellows, makes them to think it below them to condescend so far as to instruct their own Children, and much less their Servants. They did not think it below them to beget their Children in Sin, and consequently to serve the Devil; and yet, they think it below them to bring up their Children in the Service of the Living God. They did not think it beneath them to make their Children the Firebrands of Hell, and the Children of Wrath; and yet, they think it beneath them to make their Children the Children of Light, and the Heirs of Heaven.

And here now, I know very well, that these *Gentile-Men*, as they think themselves, do charge us with Ill-Breeding for telling them of theirs so Publickly.

Publickly. But, whatever they *Think* of it, we know otherwise. We know whom we have believed. We know our selves guilty of as great a Fault, in not telling them of their Faults, as they are in committing them. And therefore we are forc'd to tell them further, That, this is not all the Rudeness and Incivility that these *Civil Men*, these *Men of Good Manners*, and *Good Breeding* are guilty of. For, it is not enough for them to think it below them-selves to bring Religion into their Families, but they would have all others think it so too. They would have all others to run into the same excess of Riot with themselves. They neither go to Heaven themselves, nor suffer others to go thither, by their Good Will. But, if their *Cups*, their *Roaring*, their *Revelling*, and *Clamorous Balling and Quarrelling* do perhaps permit them at sometime to over-hear their Godly Neighbours, either a Praying or a Singing of Psalms, or a doing any other Christian Duty in their Families, the least they say, is, That they are *disturbed by them*, and that they can have no quiet in their Houses for their *silly whining*; and in plain Terms, that they are a *Company of rank Hypocrites and Fanaticks*. But Oh good God, what Times are we now fall'n into, when Sobriety, Gravity, and Family-Duties, shall be enough to Un-Church a Man! What Times are we now fall'n into! when Men are counted *Sinners* for following the Example of the Blessed Jesus, who expounded *All* those things to his Family in Private, which he had taught them in Publick, *Mark 4:34*. What an Age is this that we now live in! When Men are counted *Sinners* for doing as the Primitive Christians did; for making their Houses to be the Houses of God, and for turning them into so many little Churches and Assem-

blies of the Saints of God, *Rom. 16.5. 1 Cor. 16. 19. Col. 4. 15. Philem. 2.* And you do not know but that in one of these *Little Huts, your Lot*, the Pawn of your Peace, the Pledge of your Safety, and the Hostage of your Security, *your Lot may dwell. Once more.* What an Age is this that we now live in! When Men shall be counted *Hypocrites* for doing those *Family-Duties*, and making such a necessary Provision for the Souls of their Children and their Servants, which if they do not make, *St. Paul* tells them expressly, *They deny the Faith, and are worse than Infidels!* And if Men are grown to such an extravagant, and such a monstrous Height of Impiety, as to reckon that to be no Breach of Duty, but rather a commendable Action, which makes them *Denyers of their Faith, yea*, and makes them *worse than the very worst Infidels.* Good God! What will the end of these things be?

And thus I have done. But do not you think, that you also have done with what you have now heard. Your Work does but *Begin*, when mine is *Ended.* Your Work is to *Do* and *Practise* what I have deliver'd according to God's Word, and not to *Judge*, and to *Censure* it. *For, if thou judge the Law, thou art not a Doer of the Law, but a Judge, Jam. 4. 11.* Your Work is to *Do*, and not *Only* to *Hear.* Do you therefore make a Solemn Vow unto the Lord: But make it *Now*: Make it before you stir from hence. *Joshua* gives you, and the thing it self requires no longer time to consider of it. *For* says he, *Chuse you this day whom you will serve.* If you will chuse at all, you must chuse out of hand, you must chuse *to day*, even *Now.* Now therefore do you All make a Solemn Vow unto the Lord; That, if you have neglected *Family-Duties* hitherto, you will
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never neglect them for the time to come. But, whatever others may do in their Families, *As for Us, as for All Us that are here present, we and our Families will serve the Lord; yea, we will serve him against all Opposition to the contrary.* And let all the People say, *Amen, Lord Jesu, Amen and Amen.*

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Postscript.

THIS Discourse was Made, Preached, and Printed for the benefit of all Men, whether they *Dissent* from, or *Conform* to the Excellent Order of the Church of *England*. Which End that it may the better obtain, I am to acquaint you with a Question proposed to me since I Preached it, and the Answer that I gave my Friend that proposed it.

Quest. *The Question was this.* How I would have *Family-Duties* performed, by the *Common-Prayer-Book*, or by a *Prayer of ones own making*; or any ones else? And

Ans. *The Answer was this.* The Church of *England* had not decided either way; and consequently had left it indifferent; and accordingly I had done so too. And therefore, so it were but gravely, devoutly and affectionately performed, it was not *very material* whether the one way or the other. And the Reasons of this Answer are these.

Reason 1. *First of all,* There is no Learned and Sober *Dissenter*, that I can hear of, who reckons the *Common-Prayer-Book* or any other Set-Form of Prayer, of itself *simply unlawful*, so the Matter of it be good, and the Expressions plain, full and significant. For otherwise, so many Learned and Pious Men among them had never Printed any *Family-Prayers*, nor had

had the *Directory* been ever made. And therefore, even according to the Dissenters themselves, *A Set-Form is lawful as well as a Prayer of ones own making.*

Secondly, The Authors of the *Common-Prayer-Book* Reason 2. did never design it for the use of Private Families. For otherwise, *A Form of Prayer to be used in Private Houses every Morning and Evening*, had never been Printed with our Bibles after the *Singing Psalms*. And Bishop Patrick is express in the preface to his *Devout Christian*, *That the Reverence due to the Common-Prayer-Book will be best preserved, by imploying it only in the Publick Divine Service; or in the Private, where there is a Priest to Officiate.* And therefore, even according to the Church of England it self, *A Prayer of any ones making may be as well, if not better used in Private Families, than even the Common-Prayer-Book it self.*

Thirdly, The 55 Canon does command all Ministers before their Sermons, *to move the People to join with them in Prayer, not only in that Form there prescribed, but also to that Effect, as briefly as conveniently they may.* And if the Church Commands us to do so in Publick, much more does it Allow us to do so in Private. And therefore, even according to the Church of England it self, *A Prayer of ones own Making may be lawfully used in Private Families, as well as a Set-Form.* And therefore, seeing these things are so; I do

First of all, make this humble Request to all Dissenters: Seeing the most Learned and the most Pious Authors of your Perswasion have Printed, and thereby

thereby have *Allowed* the use of Set-Forms of Prayer for *Family-Duties*: And seeing that all among you have not the *Gift of Ex tempore Prayer*: Therefore be pleased to Pray to God by a Set-Form, rather than not Pray to him at all. When you cannot make a Prayer of your own, be pleased to make use of one already made to your Hands: Or to make use of your own Comparison, *Take Crutches when you cannot go without them.* Take the Help of others, when you cannot help your selves. And that this is no unreasonable Request is plain, from this following Instance.

An Ingenious and a Pious Merchant of this City, my Good Friend, Lodged in his Youth in a considerable Dissenters House: And after some Observation, he perceived that he and his Family never went to Prayers. Upon which, he very fairly took his Landlord aside, and asked him the reason why he had no Family-Duties in his House? And his Landlord gave him this Ingenuous Answer. I own my self guilty of Sin in doing as I do, and I do not know how I can possibly avoid it. For, *I cannot Pray Ex tempore; and I reckon it unlawful to Pray any other way.* And let all Unlearned Men of that Perswasion lay their Hands to their Hearts, and see whether this be not more or less their own condition? And that's my First Request. And my

Second Request is to the Church of England-Men, and 'tis this. Seeing the Church does not oblige you to use the Common-Prayer-Book in your Families: *Yea*, seeing it does rather oblige you to use some other Prayers, *unless you have a Priest to Officiate: Yea*, farther, Seeing its Canons do leave you at liberty to use

use a Set-Form, or else, to make a Prayer of your own to the same Effect, as conveniently as you may: Yea and further yet, seeing it gives you this Liberty even in Publick before your Sermons; Then, do not you be as *superstitiously* for, as some few others are *superstitiously* against Set-Forms. Let not those that Pray *Ex tempore* Despise them that Pray by a Form: And let not those that Pray by a Form Judge them that Pray *Ex tempore*. For, I do not in the least doubt but they both do it to the Lord. And I do not in the least doubt neither, but the Lord hath received them both. The only Misery on't is this. We both agree very well when we understand one anothers meaning. But we scarce ever vouchsafe to give one another a Meeting that we may understand one another. Let then the Dissenters be but pleased to Pray by a Form in Our Families, and we will come and Pray *Ex tempore* in *Theirs*. Or if they cannot condescend to this, let them but be of the same Heart, tho they cannot be of the same Mind with us. Let us love one another, and freely converse together without any Jealousie or Suspicion. And then, tho we should chance to be like *Christs Coat of divers Colours, and various Judgments*: Yet, we may be like it also, *Seamless, and all of a piece, knit together in one common Bond of Charity. We may hold the Faith in Unity of Spirit, in the Bond of Peace, and in Righteousness of Life.* And that this is no unreasonable Request neither, is plain from this following Instance.

About three or four years ago, I was acquainted with a Learned, a Sober, and a Wealthy Country-Gentleman of the Church of England. And upon

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some Assurances that he gave me of his Friendship, both by *Word of Mouth*, and by *Letter*, I took him to be my Friend. And one Night being in his House; and being desired to read Prayers, I readily complied with so good a Motion. But, finding the Second Lesson to be a difficult Chapter in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, which I my self did not well understand, I exchanged it for another, *against the Vanity of Apparel*, as I thought, of more Edification to some Persons who were there present. But the Gentleman, belike, took it ill, that I should offer to change the Chapter, and asked me the Reason why I durst do so. To which I gave these Answers.

First, I did not well understand that Chapter my self, and 'twas not very likely that his Family could understand it better.

Secondly, If I had understood it better, I would not have read it notwithstanding: Because, another was more useful for some Persons there present, who were, in my Judgment, but too vain and light in their Apparel: Adding, that where-ever I should chance to be, I would always do that, which would do most good to my Hearers, tho it were to my great Disadvantage in this World.

Thirdly, I had the expresse Order of the Church for what I did: For, the *Admonition to all Ministers Ecclesiastical*, Printed before the Homilies, has these Words, *Where it may so chance some one or other Chapter of the Old Testament to fall in order to be read upon the Sundays or Holydays, which were better to be changed.*

changed for some other of the New Testament of more Edification, it shall be well done to spend your Time to consider well of such Chapters before-hand, whereby your Prudence and Diligence in your Office may appear; so that your People may have cause to glorify God for you, and be the readier to embrace your Labors, to your better Commendation, to the Discharge of your Consciences and their own.

And yet for all this, and a great deal more to the same purpose that I then said to him, he so stiffly and so obstinately stuck to the *Kalendar*, that He wholly disregarded the Edification of his Family, the Breach of Friendship, and the excellent Order of the Church.

From both which Instances, not to give you any more, I humbly conceive, that both my Requests are not at all unreasonable or unseasonable. And God of his infinite Mercy grant that they may be both *Duly weighed*, and *Conscientiously Practiced*. And God grant also, that the *Rigid* and *High-flown* Men of both sides may be Disallowed and Discountenanced! And that the *Moderate* and *Sober* Men of both sides may be only approved and encouraged! That so, *Our Moderation may be known unto all Men*, and that our *Jerusalem* may be a City that is at Peace and Unity with its self! And Oh how willingly would I go and meet them half way! Yea, How willingly would I go and meet them to their own Houses! And God grant all Men may be of the same Mind for Christ his sake! Amen, Amen.

And besides these things that do equally concern my *Conforming* and *Non-Conforming* Brethren: I have

one thing more which I humbly crave leave to offer to the Consideration of my Brethren the Clergy of the Church of England in particular, because I conceive it will very much further the Observation of *Family-Duties*: And 'tis this.

The chief things which *Family-Duties* consist of, are *Reading the Scripture, Praying and Catechizing*. And the *Rubrick* obliges all Ministers to Read, in their respective Churches, Morning and Evening-Prayer, *Every Day*, as well as *Every Lord's-Day* throughout the Year. And the *Rubrick* and the 59th Canon oblige them also to Catechize *every Lords-Day, and every Holy-Day*, (and not only in *Lent-time*;) in the Afternoon for half an Hour or more, either *before Evening-Prayer, or after the Second Lesson*. And this they oblige them to upon pain of *Sharp Reproof* for the First Fault, *Suspension* for the Second, and *Excommunication* for the Third.

Now if *Parish-Ministers* will not do this of *themselves*; and if the Bishops will not make them do it, by putting the Laws in Execution against them: Then, How can it be expected, that the *People* will do it in their Private Houses, when the *Clergy themselves* will not do it in the Church of God? How can it be expected, that the *People* should *Pray and Catechize* in their Families, when the *Ministers* dare not press them to do so, for fear of betraying their own *Carelessness and Breach of Subscription*? No Man can *Heartily* Preach against that Sin, which he himself is guilty of, but his Conscience must needs fly in his Face: And if he do Preach against it *after some sort or other*, no Man can scarce believe a word of what he says, seeing his own Practice is quite contrary, and his Example confutes his Preaching.

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God knows my Heart. I do not say this to *Cast* any Contempt upon the Clergy: But, if possible, to *Wipe away* some of that which, I am afraid, is but too deservedly cast upon too many of Us. Which God of his Infinite Mercy grant, for Christ his sake. *Amen.*

FINIS.

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THere are Two Scurrilous and Scandalous Pamphlets *Maliciously and Industiously* spread about concerning me, to the hindrance of my Ministerial Office, and the blasting of my Reputation: Which, if any Man of *Common Honesty* dare but own, and set his Name to, and acquaint the World with the Place of his Abode, shall be shortly answer'd to the full. In the mean time, *Silence* and *Pity* shall be all my Reply; and in the Words of my Saviour, who suffered many such *Contradictions of Sinners*, I do heartily Pray to God, *Father forgive them; for they do not know what they do*, Luke 23. 34.

Since which,

There being a *Friendly Vindication* of my Farewel-Sermon, Printed in a Sheet and a half, by a Person wholly unknown to me, I do here publicly return him my hearty Thanks, and I am ready to do so in private too, whenever he shall be pleased to make himself known to me. And there being an *Abusive Vindication*, Printed in half a Sheet, and pretended to be Writ by *My Self*, and to be Published by my own *Book-sellers*, to make it go off the better; I do here openly declare, that I never Writ it, and that my *Book-sellers* never Published it, nor knew any thing of it.

